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ABSTRACT

Learning activities for using postage stamps in a variety of disciplines in elementary and secondary classrooms are presented. The book is divided into four sections. Following section 1, the introduction, section 2 presents 14 lesson plans, ranging in required class time from 15 minutes to several days. Each lesson focuses on a particular skill or topic within one of the following subjects: art, language arts, math, science, music, reading, and social studies. Within each lesson, the topic, activities, time, and materials are outlined. Enlarged, reproducible photos of the stamps necessary for each activity are included. While many activities are applicable to any level, such as current events or American Revolution reports based on stamps, other activities focus on a specific activities designed for use in the classroom or resource center. Many of these activities need no teacher supervision beyond the introductory direction stage. For each game, materials, directions, and suggestions for maximizing learning are provided. Section four offers information useful in preparing alternative lessons. Tips on accessories and where to acquire stamps and an extensive list of helpful organizations, publications, and audiovisual materials are included. (LP)

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ED236098

Exploring the world of stamps in your classroom.

A teacher's guide to stamp collecting.

SO 015 117

A message from the United States Postal Service:

As a teacher, you're the expert. You know better than anyone what it takes to reach your students. You know what will work and what won't. But as you read through the following pages, you'll see how effective stamps and stamp collecting can be as a teaching tool in your classroom. And, hopefully, you'll want to add the world of stamps to your curriculum.

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November, 1982

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Introduction

SECTION 1

Stamps—the great motivational tool.

Welcome to the world of stamps and stamp collecting. We call it philately (pronounced fil-lat'l-e) which means the collection and study of postage stamps, postmarks and related materials.

According to recent estimates, more than 20 million Americans are philatelists. Proof enough that stamp collecting is the world's most popular hobby.

But more important to you, stamps are also widely used as an effective teaching tool. Stamps help motivate students who may otherwise have little interest in particular subjects . . . and they add a touch of fun and flair to your classroom.

The great secret behind learning with stamps? Variety. There's something to interest everyone. Nature . . . wildlife . . . statesmen . . . writers . . . artists . . . athletes . . . scientists . . . inventors . . . historical landmarks . . . monuments . . . buildings . . . historical events . . . achievements and far more.

Through this publication you'll discover how stamps can be used as a stimulus for students to learn about a variety of subjects from art to science and music. You'll find lesson plans, games and activities, collector's tips and much more. But first, a word or two about getting started.

Fitting stamps into your curriculum.

Many schools across the country have organized Benjamin Franklin Stamp Clubs for students who show an interest in the collection and study of stamps. If your school doesn't have one, you should consider starting your own for students interested in stamp collecting. You'll find details—about all the free materials provided by the post office and how to start a Benjamin Franklin Stamp Club—in the back of this book.

But using stamps in the classroom is a separate matter.

You won't necessarily be setting aside time to study stamps. Rather, you'll be using stamps to study math, science, history, social studies and a host of other courses. In Section II of this booklet, you'll find lessons designed for specific subjects.

For instance, during a history class, you could use stamps to teach students the historical order of U.S. Presidents. (You'll find this lesson on page 61.) Or during an art class, use stamps to help students choose an artist to study and prepare a report on. (You'll find this lesson on page 15.)

The lessons in this booklet range in length from 15 minutes to several days. And the possibilities for creating your own lessons using stamps are endless!

As you'll soon discover by using stamps in your classroom, that one of the biggest benefits for students—aside from increased interest—will be improved research methods. They will need to turn to a variety of books and materials to find stamps and information about the subjects of particular stamps. And while they're at it, they'll pick up beneficial research techniques that can be applied to every area of study.

Getting your stamp activities off the ground.

Before you begin, you'll need a supply of stamps. Any kind will do. You can use canceled stamps found on mail delivered to your school or your home. A classroom full of students should be able to bring in quite an assortment in no time at all. In Section IV of this booklet, you'll find more ideas for gathering stamps as well as step by step instructions on removing stamps from envelopes.

Your next step is to arrange the stamps in some orderly fashion for easy identification and retrieval. For this, you'll need an album. Try a small loose-leaf one. It lets you add pages as your collection grows.

For younger students, try an illustrated album—it helps keep interest alive and also brings better understanding of the stamps. Some classes have even designed their own albums using a loose-leaf notebook and drawings by some of the students.

An album commonly used by Ben Franklin Stamp Clubs—and given free by the Postal Service to members—is the *Treasury of Stamps Album*. This fully-illustrated folder has descriptions for stamps that will be issued during the coming year.

The stamps and album are essential to getting your stamp activities started, but there are other accessories you'll want to have and you'll find these described in Section IV of this booklet.

SECTION 2

A Teacher's Cookbook of Classroom Lesson Plans

Dear Teacher:

Pick a subject—any subject. No matter what you choose, postage stamps can be used to teach something about your subject in an exciting and unusual way.

Stamps are versatile. They can be woven into any subject area—from art to zoology—in ways which make classroom assignments more like play than work.

To show just how versatile stamps are, this section of the booklet is devoted to presenting a panorama of interesting and thought-provoking classroom activities. Each activity is presented as a suggestion for incorporating stamps in your daily classroom lessons. As suggestions, they should be tailored to suit your particular needs, the ability levels of your students, the length of time available for particular activities and the materials on hand.

Feel free to modify these ideas as you wish or create your own. The possibilities are endless.

Art

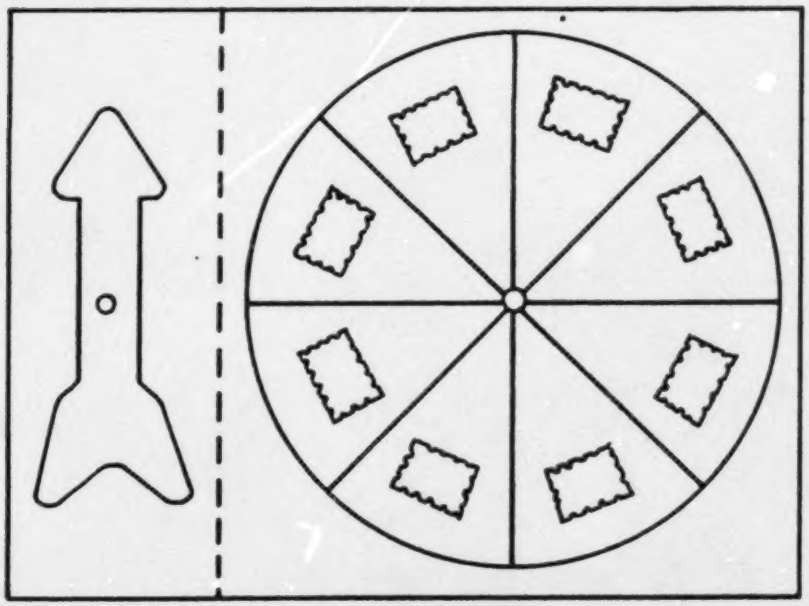
Topic:	Famous American artists.
Instructional Activity:	Using postage stamps to identify eminent American artists.
Suggested Time:	Five days from start to finish.
Materials Needed:	A piece of bristol board, one paper fastener, scissors, paste, and the stamps shown here (these can be cut from the following page, or you can use actual stamps).

About the activity:

You or a parent volunteer need to make the game board to be used for this activity. First cut a large arrow from your piece of bristol board and a large circle from the remaining piece of board. Then punch a hole in the center of the arrow, mount it (with a paper fastener) directly in the middle of the circle and you have your basic game board.

Have your students cut out the stamps which appear in this lesson and paste them at equal intervals around the outer edge of the game board.

Let each student spin the arrow to determine which American artist he or she will study. Then have each student research and write a report about the artist and look for illustrations of the artist's more notable works.



Grandma Moses
6c U. S. Postage

UNITED STATES POSTAGE
5¢

UNITED STATES 6¢
John Trumbull
AMERICAN ARTIST

2¢

JOHN COPLEY-AMERICAN ARTIST
UNITED STATES POSTAGE 5 CENTS

UNITED STATES POSTAGE
10¢

UNITED STATES POSTAGE
1¢
GILBERT CHARLES STUART

3¢

Mary Cassatt
American Artist
5C
U.S. POSTAGE

Grammar and Composition

Topic:	Getting students to write well thought out reports on different types of American wildlife.
Instructional Activity:	Using a Wildlife Cube.
Suggested Time:	This assignment might cover six days.
Materials Needed:	Scissors, glue, a large sheet of heavy construction paper, and the Wildlife Cube provided in this section of the guide.

About the activity:

Wildlife Cube...

Children of all ages have an affectionate curiosity for animals. Here's an ideal way you can use that fondness to create an interesting and enjoyable classroom writing activity.

Shown in this lesson is a diagram of a Wildlife Cube which you can use to enhance your students' interest in studying the wild animals of the United States.

Simply cut out and assemble the cube as shown. Then, let each student take turns rolling the cube. Their roll will determine which wild animal he or she will study. Since you probably have more than six students in your class, you may wish to give each student who draws the same animal different assignments such as researching the animal's habits, living environment or physical characteristics. This helps to create student reporting teams—groups which are highly successful in getting the entire class involved.

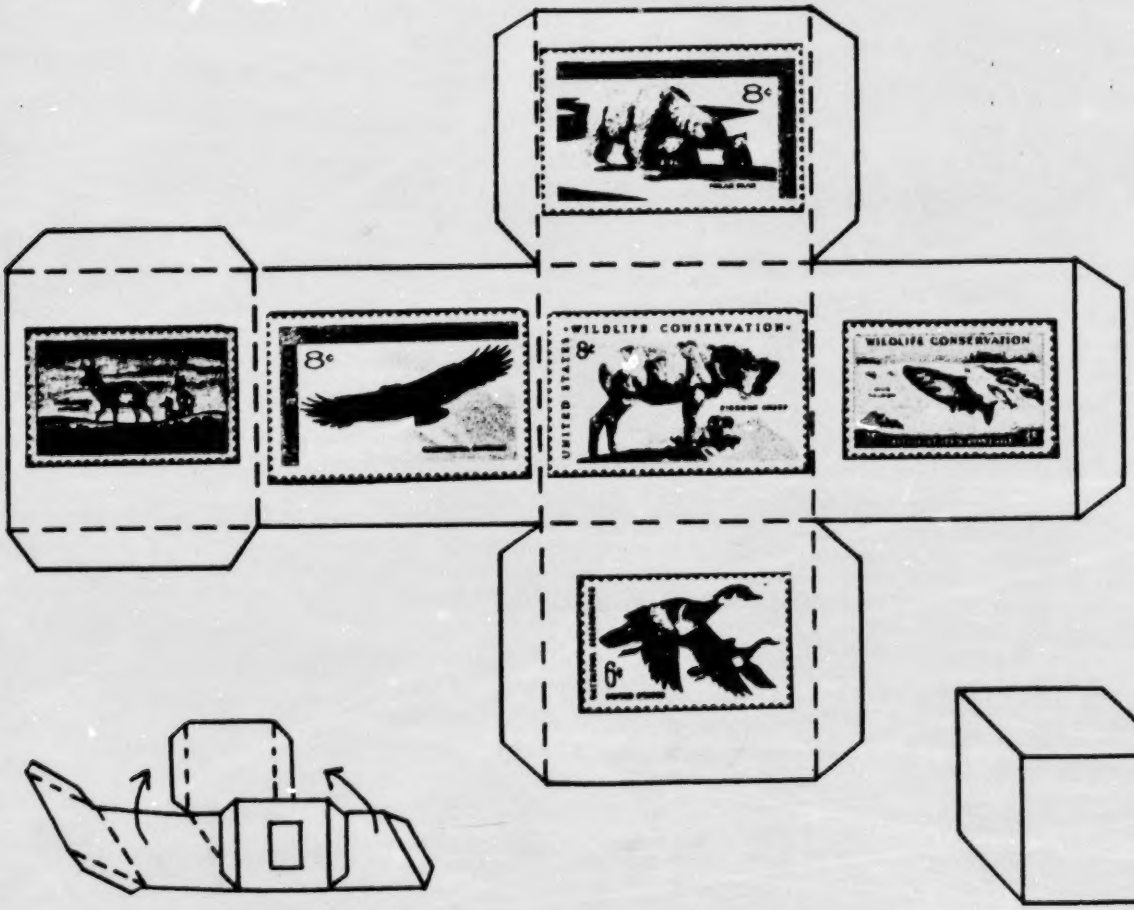
This activity also eliminates the difficulty in getting students to decide which animal they would like to study.

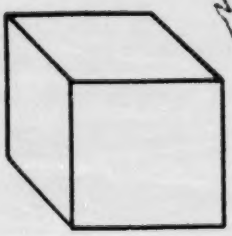
Here's how to assemble the cube:

1. Evenly apply a thin coating of glue onto a piece of heavy construction paper and attach it to this sheet. The construction paper will give the cube some rigidity.
2. Cut the cube along the solid black lines and fold along all of the dotted lines.
3. Glue all of the flaps under on the appropriate sides of the folded cube. When the glue has dried thoroughly, you're ready to have the youngsters play with the cube.

Remember it's more than just fun:

1. Have the students write reports on their topics, or have them put together a scrap book of pictures of the animal they have chosen to study.
2. Have the students design and color their own wildlife conservation posters.





Mathematics

Topic:	Solving word problems.
Instructional Activity:	Use postage stamps to help students learn about solving simple word problems.
Suggested Time:	One-half hour.
Materials Needed:	The stamps shown here and several 3 by 5 inch index cards, scissors, and glue.

About the activity:

Word problems are dreaded by most students, but they don't have to be. Stamps can make word problems easier. Try the stamp and stamp problems shown here, then develop your own stamp-related word problems.

Simply cut out the four problems provided in this lesson and glue each onto its own 3 by 5 inch index card. Then pass them around the class randomly so that every child gets a chance to solve at least one of the problems. If time permits, have each student try to solve all four.

After the computations have been completed, you can go over the answers in class.

Problem 1. Six racers were running a downhill course on a bobsled. At a sharp curve along the snow-covered course, two of the racers fell off. How many racers were left on the bobsled?

Problem 2. Five bicyclists were peddling along a bumpy bike path. One of the riders hit a deep pothole and fell off his bike. Another biker, seeing this, swerved to avoid hitting the fallen rider, and he too fell off. How many riders were left on their bikes?

Problem 3. While running in a race, two athletes were hit by a car and were taken to the hospital. Another runner took a wrong turn and got lost. How many of the five runners who started the race were left at the finish line?

Problem 4: Five were racing down an icy hill. One slipped and broke his skis. Another racer misjudged a real sharp turn and ran into a tree. How many racers of the original five were left to finish the course?

Mathematics (Continued)

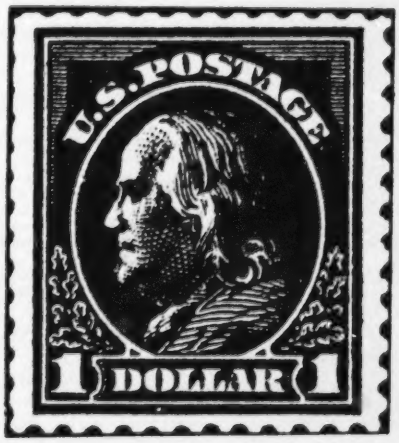
Here's another idea . . .

To show younger students how to add and subtract, use the denominations on postage stamps.

To begin, write a number on the classroom's chalk board so that all in the class can see it. Then, give each student one of the Benjamin Franklin stamps provided here (these can simply be cut from this section with scissors). Have each student add and/or subtract the denomination of their stamp from the number written on the chalk board. You can change the number on the board as often as you like.

The students can do their addition or subtraction on the board or on a piece of notebook paper.

As an added twist, you might consider making the students add and subtract in dollars and cents to help them learn about money.



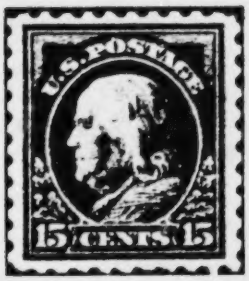
U.S. POSTAGE
8 CENTS 8

U.S. POSTAGE
9 CENTS 9

U.S. POSTAGE
10 CENTS 10

U.S. POSTAGE
11 CENTS 11

U.S. POSTAGE
12 CENTS 12


U.S. POSTAGE
15 CENTS 15

U.S. POSTAGE
20 CENTS 20

U.S. POSTAGE
30 CENTS 30

U.S. POSTAGE
50 CENTS 50

U.S. POSTAGE
2 DOLLARS 2

U.S. POSTAGE
5 DOLLARS 5

Mathematics (Continued)

And here's another idea . . .

Topic:	Money and Math
Instructional Activity:	Using stamps to increase proficiency in addition, subtraction and percentages.
Suggested Time:	One hour.
Materials Needed:	8½ x 11 inch construction paper and drawing materials for each student, a variety of stamps (enough so that each student can have at least a dollar's worth of stamps.)

About the activity:

Here are three lessons you can try with your students. They're all about stamps and money.

Give each student a piece of construction paper and drawing materials. Instruct each to draw an oversized dollar bill on the paper. Give each student access to a large variety of stamps from your classroom collection and tell them each to fill their dollar bills with enough stamps for their combined denominations to equal one dollar—and not a penny more.

Now, using their dollar's worth of stamps, have students trade stamps with each other while keeping the total value ($1.00) of their collections the same.

Next, announce to your class that you have to collect a 25% tax on their dollar of stamps. Let each student figure out how much that would be in stamps. Some will have the right denominations, others will have to trade first.

Music

Topic:	Reviewing for a music test with "Learning Links."
Instructional Activity:	Using the values printed on postage stamps as a way of reviewing material learned in music class.
Suggested Time:	One hour.
Materials Needed:	Scissors, a quantity of 3 by 5 inch index cards and the sixteen playing pieces contained in this section of the guide.

About the activity:

Here's an ideal way to help students review what they have learned in music class.

Before you begin, prepare 20 or so questions on the subject matter just covered in music class. Each question, and the answer, should be written on one side of a 3 by 5 inch index card. Place these "questions cards" face down in a pile.

Some sample questions: Who is known as The Father of the Blues?
Answer: W.C. Handy.

Identify "The March King"
Answer: John Philip Sousa.

Learning Links is much like dominoes. In this lesson, you'll find 16 "stamp cards" (two stamps on each card) which should be cut out and placed face down in front of the two students playing. You begin by having each player randomly select three stamp cards. They should keep their selections secret.

From the remaining stamp cards (which should be face down) select one and place it face up between the two players. Each player in turn then tries to match a denomination of this card with one of the three stamp cards held. Only stamps of similar value may be joined together. (Remember, there are two denominations on each stamp card.)

When a player cannot make a play, the opponent draws a question card which the player must answer. Answered correctly, the player then adds to his hand by choosing a stamp card from the pile. Play then reverts to the other player.

If the player answers the question card incorrectly, the turn is over and the player is penalized 20 points.

The object is to get rid of all your stamp cards without accumulating penalty points. The game is over when one of the players lays down all cards. The winner is determined by adding penalty points plus the value of the stamps on the stamp cards remaining in the player's hand. Lowest point score wins.

AMERICAN MUSIC
U.S.POSTAGE 5 CENTS

6c
UNITED STATES
W.C.HANDY

Ernie Pyle
Journalist
16¢
Fire Pumper
1860s
USA 20¢

Reading

Topic: Getting students to read great American classics.

Instructional Activity: Use postage stamps as a way of enticing your students to read illustrated comic or book versions of classic works of literature.

Suggested Time: Two to three hours.

Materials Needed: A sufficient number of illustrated comic or book versions of noted American classics, a quantity of 3 by 5 inch index cards, glue, scissors, and a shopping bag.

About the activity:

Cut out the stamps shown here and glue each onto a 3 by 5 inch index card. Use only those cards which feature authors' works you have available. Then place the cards in a large shopping bag.

Have each student pull one card from the bag and that card should be used to determine which author the student should read. Since you probably have several works by the same author, this type of activity can be used over and over again.

Science

Topic:	Learning about dinosaurs.
Instructional Activity:	Using stamps to help students classify dinosaurs according to diet.
Suggested Time:	Three days to construct and use this activity.
Materials Needed:	Two pieces of colored felt, a large piece of cardboard, glue, scissors, and squares of black construction paper.

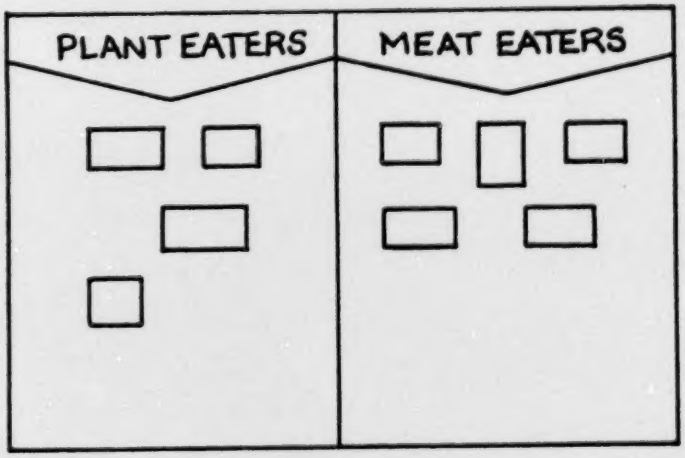
About the activity:

Use the felt strips and the piece of cardboard to create a felt board. Each half of the felt board should be labeled for the different types of eaters: those who ate plants and those who ate meat. Label each side of the felt board according to the food source: plant eaters or meat eaters.

Next, remove the different dinosaur stamps shown in this lesson and paste each onto a small square piece of black construction paper. On the back of each square, glue a small section of felt so the squares will be able to stick to the felt board.

Distribute the squares to small groups of students and have each group determine whether their dinosaurs were plant eaters or meat eaters. Then have them place the squares in the appropriate sections.

For added fun, try timing the groups to see which can finish first without error.



POLSKA
GR 20
EUPHOSAURUS

Zł 3.40
CORYTHOSAURUS
POLSKA

GR 30
POLSKA

GR
STEGOSAURUS

Zł 1.15
BRACHIOSAURUS
POLSKA

POLSKA
GR 40
IGUANODONSAURUS

Zł 5.60
PTERANODONTIDAE
POLSKA

GR 60
POLSKA

Zł 6.50
TYRANNOSAURUS
POLSKA

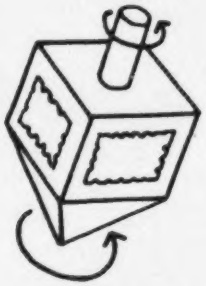
1.35
POLSKA

Science (Continued)

Here's another idea . . .

Kids are naturally attracted to the subject of space. Build upon that attraction with a "space spinner."

A space spinner is nothing more than a dreidel-type top with various space stamps glued to the sides. Each student in your class should have a turn at spinning the top. Whichever space stamp winds up on the face of the dreidel facing up, that's the subject they should investigate.



Ask a parent who is handy with woodworking tools to make the dreidel-type top for you out of soft wood.

Here are some stamps which can be used on your space spinner

Science (Continued)

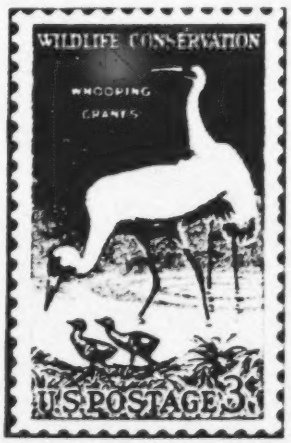
And here's another idea . . .

Topic:	American Wildlife.
Instructional Activity:	Using stamps to identify and geographically locate American wildlife.
Suggested Time:	One hour plus variable research time.
Materials Needed:	Wildlife stamps shown here (these can be cut from this page or you can use the actual stamps), a large printed map of the U.S., scissors, paste, 3 by 5 inch index cards and a small paper bag.

About the activity:

Cut out the stamps which appear in this lesson. Reinforce them by cutting 3 by 5 inch index cards in half vertically and pasting a stamp on each piece. Place these in a paper bag and have each student draw one stamp from the bag.

Tell students to research the wildlife animal on their stamps—eating and living habits, where they can be found in this country. Once all the research is complete, have each student in turn tack their wildlife stamp on an area of the map where that animal can be found and tell the class what they discovered about their particular animal.



Social Studies

Topic:	Current events.
Instructional Activity:	Make and use a Current Event Selector to help make your students aware of the major problems confronting society.
Suggested Time:	This assignment might cover six days.
Materials Needed:	Enough pieces of 4 by 8 inch construction paper for every other student in class to have one, paste, blunt point scissors, and one of the stamps shown here for each pair of students in your class.

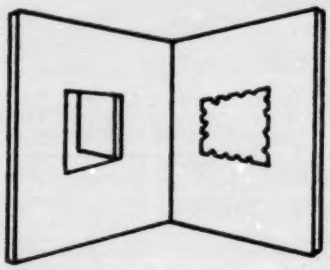
About the activity:

Have students work in pairs. Give each team a pre-cut 4 by 8 inch piece of colored construction paper. Next, provide each twosome with one of the social issue stamps illustrated in this lesson. (You can also use the actual stamps if available.)

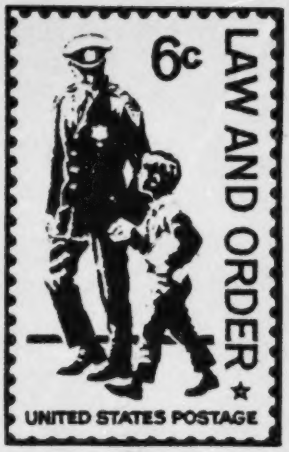
Have the teams fold their pieces of paper into a 4 by 4 inch booklet, then have them carefully cut a small door in the center of one side (leave one side uncut for the flap) just large enough so the stamp can be seen. The stamp should be pasted to the inside back cover. The final step is to paste the insides together without getting any adhesive on the stamp or the door. Your door can now open or shut freely, with the stamp in full view when open.

Once the glue is dried, place the Current Event Selectors in a paper bag and have each team pull a Selector from the bag.

For the next five days, have each student cut as many newspaper articles as they can find about the current event topic they've selected. The clippings should be neatly pasted on pieces of notebook paper which can be combined together into a classroom Current Events Scrapbook.

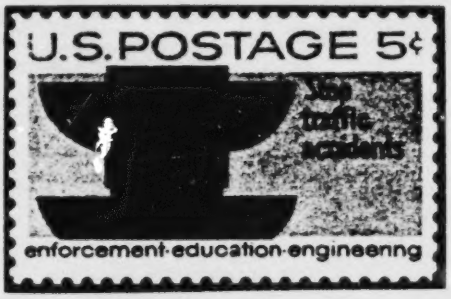


Prevent
drug abuse
8c


6c
LAW AND ORDER
UNITED STATES POSTAGE

plan
for
better
cities
UNITED STATES POSTAGE 5c

REGISTER
& VOTE


U.S.POSTAGE 5¢
enforcement·education·engineering

RANGE CONSERVATION
UNITED STATES POSTAGE 4c

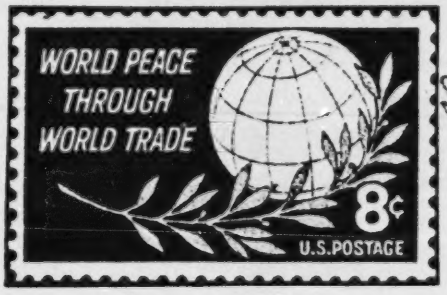
FOOD FOR PEACE
5c
UNITED STATES
FREEDOM FROM HUNGER

WATERFOWL CONSERVATION
6c
UNITED STATES

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS
U.S.POSTAGE 4¢

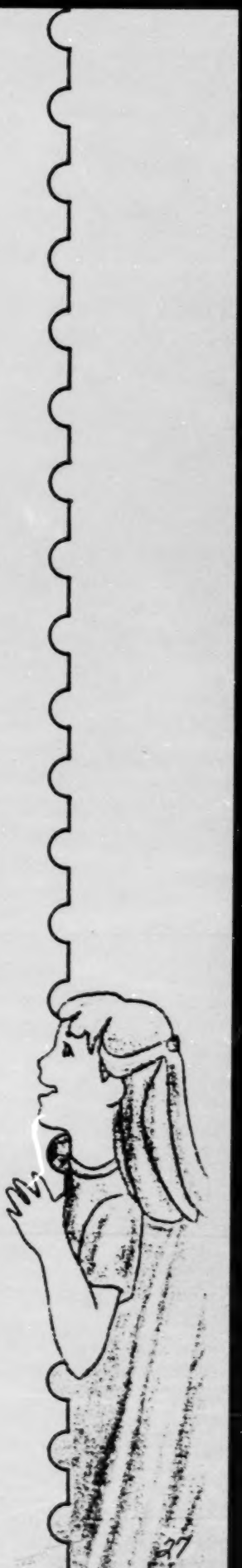
EMPLOY THE HANDICAPPED
4c
UNITED STATES POSTAGE

WATER CONSERVATION
4¢
UNITED STATES POSTAGE

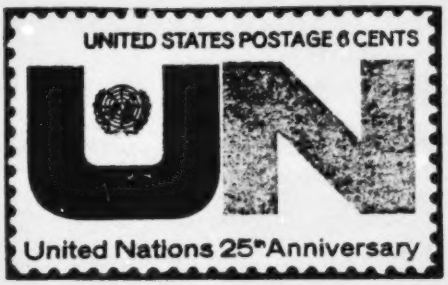

WORLD PEACE
THROUGH
WORLD TRADE
8¢
U.S.POSTAGE

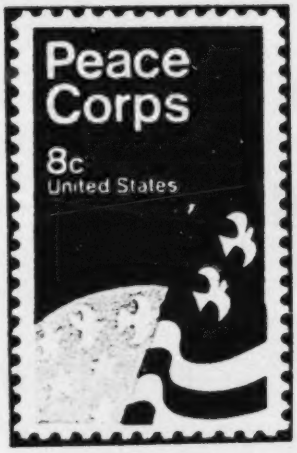
SAVE OUR SOIL
UNITED STATES · SIX CENTS
SAVE OUR CITIES
UNITED STATES · SIX CENTS
SAVE OUR WATER
UNITED STATES · SIX CENTS
SAVE OUR AIR
UNITED STATES · SIX CENTS

6c US
PLANT for more BEAUTIFUL CITIES
6c US
PLANT for more BEAUTIFUL PARKS
6c US
PLANT for more BEAUTIFUL HIGHWAYS
6c US
PLANT for more BEAUTIFUL STREETS



CARE
1946-1971
US 8c


UNITED STATES POSTAGE 6 CENTS
UN
United Nations 25th Anniversary


Peace Corps
8c
United States

REGISTER
VOTE
5c
POSTAGE

Religious
Freedom
IN AMERICA
3c UNITED STATES
POSTAGE

HOPE
FOR THE CRIPPLED

CONSERVATION
FOREST
U.S. POSTAGE
4¢

WORLD REFUGEE YEAR
UNITED STATES POSTAGE 4c

U.S.
POSTAGE
5c
ANIMALS

DECATUR HOUSE
U.S. 8c
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
U.S. 8c
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
SAN FRANCISCO CABLE CAR
U.S. 8c
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
U.S. 8c
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

TROUT
8¢
8¢
ALLIGATOR
8¢
POLAR BEAR
8¢
CALIFORNIA CONDOR

Social Studies (Continued)

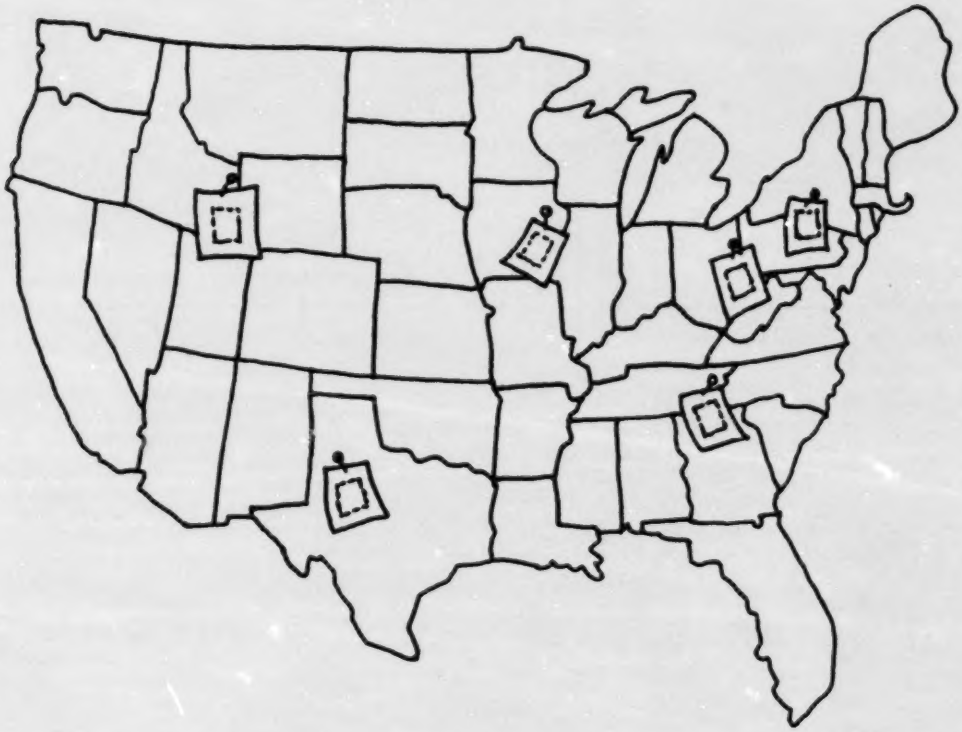
Here's another idea . . .

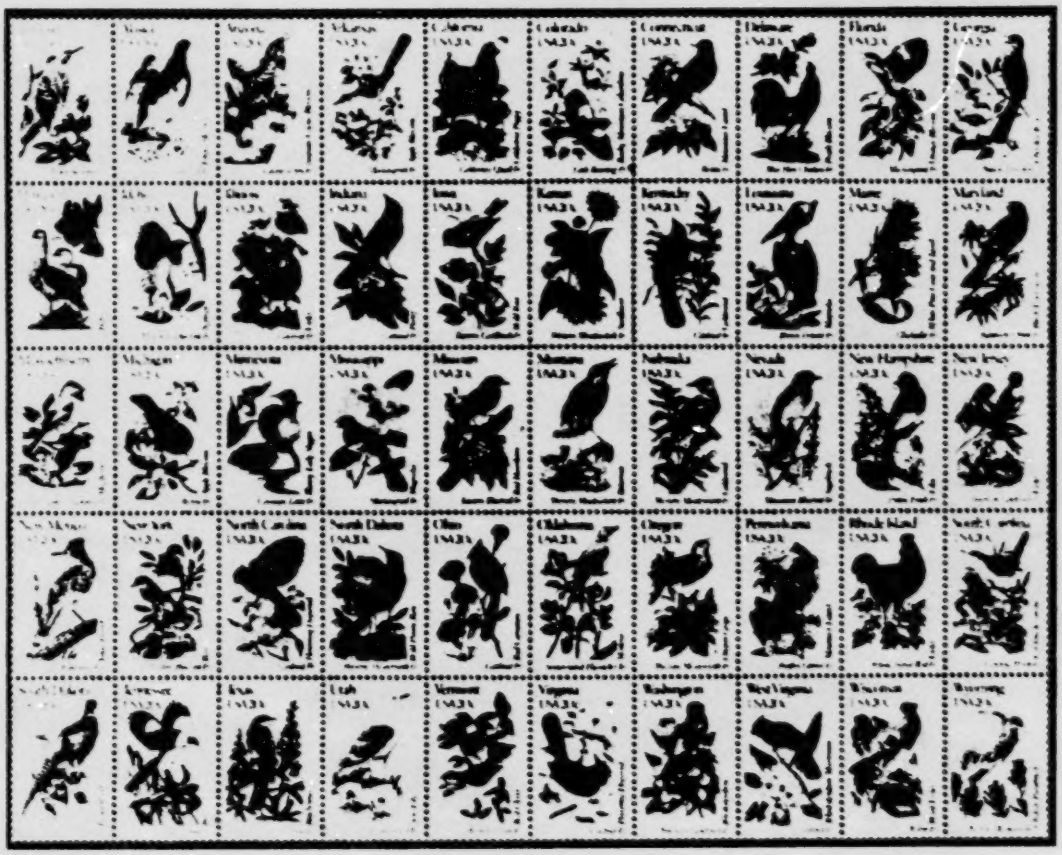
As a novel way to get students interested in preparing reports on different states, try this activity.

Place each of the 50 state flower and bird stamps shown in this lesson on separate 3 by 5 inch index cards. Go around the room and let each student select one card from the deck, but don't let them see what they're selecting.

Then have each student write a two-page report on the state they selected. They already know the identity of the state bird and flower.

To help students better understand the location of states, have them prepare an enlarged version of the map of the United States. Then have students place the stamp they selected on the appropriate spot on the map.





History

Topic:	Teaching students about the Presidents.
Instructional Activity:	Using the stamps of the 1938–1943 Presidential Series to teach students when each of the early Presidents was in office.
Suggested Time:	One hour.
Materials Needed:	Twenty-two 2 by 3 inch cardboard squares, glue, and the stamp illustrations provided here.

About the activity:

Students have a tough time placing each of the early Presidents in their proper order. To see just how difficult this can be, ask several of your students which President served first, Martin Van Buren or James K. Polk. Chances are few, if any, know that Van Buren was the eighth President, while Polk was the eleventh.

Stamps can help resolve this identity crisis.

Use the stamps of the 1938–43 Presidential Series to help put the Presidents in perspective. As it worked out, on this series George Washington was honored on the 1-cent stamp as the first President; John Adams was depicted on the 2-cent value as the second chief executive, and so on until the 22-cent stamp in the series, which portrayed the 22nd President, Grover Cleveland. Thereafter, the denominations become higher and the link with the chain in terms of tenure in office is lost, but for the nation's first twenty-two Presidents, this scheme works just fine.

There were several stamps in this series which tickled President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was in office when this series of stamps was released. Roosevelt took great joy in the fact that George Washington, as the "Father of his country," should appear on the 1-cent stamp, while Thomas Jefferson, the "Father of the Democratic Party," should show up on the most widely used denomination. Roosevelt was a Democrat. Another irony which Roosevelt found amusing was that Calvin Coolidge, a President noted for his thrift, should be recognized on the nation's most expensive stamp, a $5 issue.

To use the Presidential Series in the classroom simply cut out each of the twenty-two stamps found in this section of the guide and mount them separately on 2 by 3 inch cardboard cards. Distribute one card to each student in your class and have them arrange themselves in a line according to the denomination on the stamp they have. Starting with the 1-cent value, have each youngster call out the name of their Presidential stamp in succession.

UNITED STATES POSTAGE
2 CENTS 2
3 CENTS 3
4 CENTS 4
6 CENTS 6
7 CENTS 7
8 CENTS 8
9 CENTS 9
10 CENTS 10
11 CENTS 11
12 CENTS 12
13 CENTS 13
14 CENTS 14
15 CENTS 15
16 CENTS 16
17 CENTS 17
18 CENTS 18
19 CENTS 19
20 CENTS 20
21 CENTS 21
22 CENTS 22

History (Continued)

Here's another idea . . .

Have your students stage their own stamp exhibition based upon a unit you're now covering in class. Write a number of topics related to the unit on 3 by 5 inch index cards and place them in a shopping bag. Have each student draw a card from the bag to determine what their two-page stamp exhibit will cover.

Have each student mount the stamps they feel are appropriate, using peelable stamp mounting hinges or some other type of acetate mount. You should provide each youngster with pieces of 8½ by 11 inch heavy weight white paper for this activity.

The arrangement of the stamps on the pages, the method of lettering, and the decorations on the exhibit pages should be left up to the students. Here though are some suggestions which might prove helpful.

Tip One: Getting stamps for this activity. Place an announcement in your school's parent/teacher organization newsletter requesting donations of used stamps. If there isn't a parent newsletter, attach your request to the weekly menu which goes home with the students or attach a small notice on the youngster's latest assignment sheet.

Another way to obtain stamps is to place a poster asking for donations in the lobby of a local office building. Workers are usually more than happy to remove used stamps from discarded envelopes and provide them to schools. It might be helpful if you place a "donation box" near the sign. Remember to ask the building manager's permission before placing your poster and donation box in the lobby.

Tip Two: Soaking the stamps off the envelope remnants you receive. You can remove a stamp that is affixed to an envelope fragment by soaking the paper in a pan of lukewarm water. Allow the paper to soak until the stamp gum dissolves and the stamp floats free.

Place the wet stamp, face down, on a piece of absorbent paper, such as an old newspaper, towel or blotter. Allow the stamp to dry out on its own. If the dried stamp curls or wrinkles, simply place it between two blotters after moistening the affected area, and put the sandwiched stamp under a heavy weight, such as a good sized book. Don't soak stamps on white envelope fragments with colored paper envelopes. The colors may run.

Colored cancellations and handstamped postal markings may also run, so be careful to separate these.

Some stamp inks—especially purples—tend to run if the stamp is soaked too long. For this reason, it's wise to remove a stamp from the bath as soon as it floats free of the envelope—but not generally before then.

Self-adhesive stamps (such as the "Dove of Peace" U.S. Christmas stamp issued several years ago) cannot be soaked off in water. These types of stamps should simply be trimmed as close to the envelope remnant as possible.

Tip Three: How to use stamp hinges. To use a stamp hinge, fold back about 1/4 of the top of the sticky side of the hinge. Then, lightly moisten the part that you have folded back and place it on the back of your stamp. Try to position the hinge so that it's squarely at the top of the stamp's back.

Next, hold the hinged stamp with tongs, and wet the bottom portion of the hinge and affix it to the exhibit page. If you make a mistake in positioning the stamp, don't remove it immediately. Wait several hours before you try removing a misplaced stamp. If you try taking a stamp off the page prematurely you're liable to damage the stamp or harm the exhibit paper. This can happen if you try removing a hinged stamp while the adhesive is still moist.

Tip Four: There are a few things which you might want to keep in mind before you place the stamps on your exhibit pages. One important factor which should be given attention is how much decoration there will be. As a rule of thumb, it's not smart to use too much ornamentation since this detracts from the natural beauty of the stamps. If you're going to add borders around the pages, draw them on first. Make sure you've made allowances for titles and any write-ups you plan to add.

Titles can be lettered right on the paper or they can be added by typewriter. To avoid the risk of making too many mistakes, it might be helpful if the headings and write-ups are placed on self-adhesive labels which can be positioned on the exhibit page as required. If you decide to use a typewriter, why not make good use of a two-color ribbon? Having black and red type often adds to the overall appearance of an exhibit page.

Remember not to try to crowd too much onto each page; and, keep the layout well-balanced.

Here's a sample list of topics related to a unit on the American Revolution which will help to illustrate how a stamp exhibition, such as the one described here, can be used to support a subject covered in your classroom. Remember, this is only one example. There are many others.

- Revolutionary War Generals
- Patriotic Leaders
- Battlefield Heros
- Naval Warfare
- Colonial Diplomats
- Military Campaigns
- Historic Buildings
- Colonial Flags
- The Declaration of Independence
- Pamphleteers
- Foreign Volunteers, like Lafayette, Pulaski, Von Steuben, and Kosciuszko
- Forts
- Frontiersmen
- Colonial Uniforms
- The Continental Congress
- Famous Heroines
- Colonial Craftsmen
- Naval Commanders

Carpenters' Hall
U.S. 10¢
WE ASK BUT FOR PEACE, LIBERTY AND SAFETY
First Continental Congress—1774
Bicentennial Era
DERIVING THEIR JUST POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED
Declaration of Independence—1776

SECTION 3

Philatelic Fun

Learning Games & Activities with Postage Stamps

by
Virginia Mealy
Benjamin Franklin
Stamp Club Advisor
St. Louis, Missouri

Introduction:

When you make learning fun, interesting and challenging, students are turned on immediately. And that's the whole idea behind this section on stamp games and activities. Stamps offer opportunities for teaching every subject from history to literature to mathematics. And it's easy learning for students, who quickly forget they're being "taught" because they're having so much *fun*.

The stamp games you'll find in this section are the result of working with students who wanted to learn about philately. Time and time again, however, these activities have proven to be highly motivating to young collectors *and* other students who show no interest in philately.

These games and activities are usable in an instructional resource center, a classroom or in a stamp club setting. All are activities which do not require teacher direction once they are learned. Success is built into each activity because the students enjoy working with each other and with stamps!

Preparation and Techniques:

1. Select the activity you wish to reproduce.
2. Choose the materials for constructing the activity.

   Make the gameboard or cards of material that will be durable. (Manila file folders or tagboard works best.) Decide on the size of the gameboard. (Some prefer large boards—the size of a usual piece of commercial tagboard—28 by 22 inch. File folders are excellent for several reasons. They are easily obtainable, have a fairly high degree of durability, come in a variety of colors, and store easily.
3. Reproduce the game format onto the material selected.

   The reproduction can easily be done by

   - Using an opaque projector.
   - Copying the board or cards free hand.
   - Making a transparency of the page and using an overhead projector to make an enlarged copy.
   - Copying the game format using the grid-method. Simply divide the picture to be copied into small squares and duplicate the individual block lines in proportionately larger squares on the selected materials.
4. Whenever possible, add color.

   Any game is much more appealing when it is in color. All markings and lines should be very clean and clear so that students are in no way confused.
5. Last, but certainly not least, laminate the gameboard and any parts of a game to preserve them. Use clear contact paper (available in department stores and discount stores) if a laminating press is not available.

Some extra hints

After making one or two of these activities, additional methods and shortcuts will become apparent. Those given here may save time and effort.

Stamps

Begin to make a collection of stamps, mint quality as well as used. In a small box, keep envelopes of various kinds, such as nature stamps, achievement stamps, people stamps, etc. Later you may want to get even more specific. Your people stamps, for instance, might then be divided into envelopes of famous women, presidents, inventors, etc.

Visit stamp and coin shops and ask others to save stamps for your use. Many stamp and coin shops have bins of cancelled stamps for you to choose from for just pennies a stamp. These are excellent sources for finding what you need for certain activities.

If you have trouble finding the stamps you really need, use extra copies of stamp books and magazines. Especially helpful is *Stamp Fun*, the philatelic publication of the United States Postal Service. Many stamp magazines have pictures of stamps which can be used, but do try for those which are reproduced in color.

Cards

Cards are usually cut-up tagboard—2 by 3 inch. Blank cards can be purchased commercially. Each game which contains cards should have distinctive backs to them, so that if mixed up they can easily be put back into the right places. There are several ways to do this: write the name of the game on one side; slash one corner of a particular set; use one particular stamp on the back of each in a set; round the corners on the cards in a particular set.

If there is printing on cards which students will hold in their hands or play on a table facing opposite each other, print the wording on *both ends* of the card so that it can be read easily from either direction.

Markers

Markers can be poker chips, buttons, miniature toys such as cars, boats, golf tees, charms from candy machines, gumball machine prizes or a variety of other small items. Or, they can be purchased commercially.

Spinners

Spinners can also be purchased commercially. To *make* a spinner, cut a piece of tagboard into the desired shape (not always round!), cut a piece of plastic from a coffee or margarine lid in the shape of the pointer, and attach it to the tagboard with a brad fastener. Usually the pointer has only one pointed end, but sometimes a pointer with an arrow at both ends makes a game more interesting and speeds up a game that drags on too long.

Adding "professional" touches to games and activities

Often it is easier, and looks much better, if professionally-made pictures, graphics and lettering are used. Pictures can be added from copies of *Stamp Fun* (the United States Postal Service publication for the Benjamin Franklin Stamp Clubs), and from gift wrapping paper. Cut them out and glue to the board or game cards. Sometimes old textbooks, stamp catalogs, and philatelic advertising materials provide wonderfully colored pictures that are perfect for a game or activity.

Press-type lettering which is heat resistant (if you plan to laminate) gives professional lettering results. Any type of markers can be used on materials, but once laminated, a permanent marker must be used if something later needs to be added. Sanford's SHARPIES have good points and vibrant colors for this purpose. They are permanent and will write on anything.

Suggestions for storage of games

Store any games or activities which do not have gameboards in a labeled box covered with contact paper. Put the name of the game or activity on the top *and* on the side of the box. This way, they can be easily identified on a shelf or in a file drawer.

For those activities requiring gameboards, put all moving parts to the game in a zip-lock or other plastic bag. Clip parts to the gameboard with a plastic clothespin. (For real durability, make simple cloth bags with zippers or purchase school pencil bags.)

If gameboards are made on file folders, store these, along with a bag containing the playing pieces, in a file cabinet or in the large, self-assembling cardboard boxes sold in discount stores. If gameboards are made of large tagboard, find a box which, when standing upright, will hold the gameboard. Cover it with contact paper and label it "gameboards." Playing pieces can then be put into small boxes (such as gift or greeting card boxes), covered with the contact paper and labeled again on top and on the side. Clipping plastic or other bags with game pieces to large gameboards does not work very well.

(**NOTE:** Be sure that directions for each game are on the back of the gameboard and also in the box with the playing pieces. It is a good idea to keep a separate set of instructions filed for easy reference should other directions be lost.)

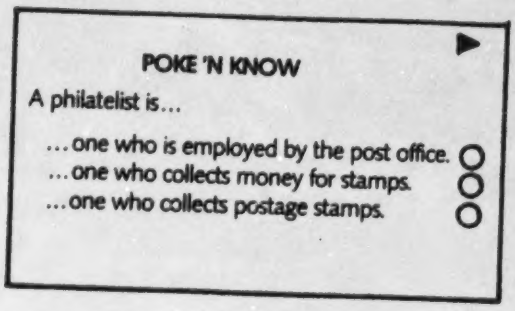
Poke 'N Know

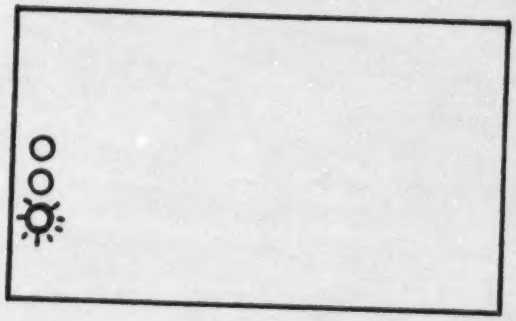
Number of Players: 1 player
Contents: 24 Poke 'N Know Cards
1 golf tee

Playing Directions:

Students use these cards by themselves for a self-checking activity.

In a quiet spot, have your student take the cards and the golf tee from the box. Each card has a question or open-ended statement with a choice of three answers. The golf tee is used to poke the punched hole next to what is believed to be the correct answer. To check, your student must flip the card over. Each of the punched holes are color coded and the correct answer will match the color of the golf tee being used. Your student will know immediately if the chosen answer is correct.


POKE 'N KNOW
A philatelist is...
...one who is employed by the post office.
...one who collects money for stamps.
...one who collects postage stamps.



▶ = color of golf tee

○ color around hole with correct answer; color is same as golf tee.

Stamp Camp

Number of Players: 1 or 2 players
Contents: 12 teepees cut exactly in half

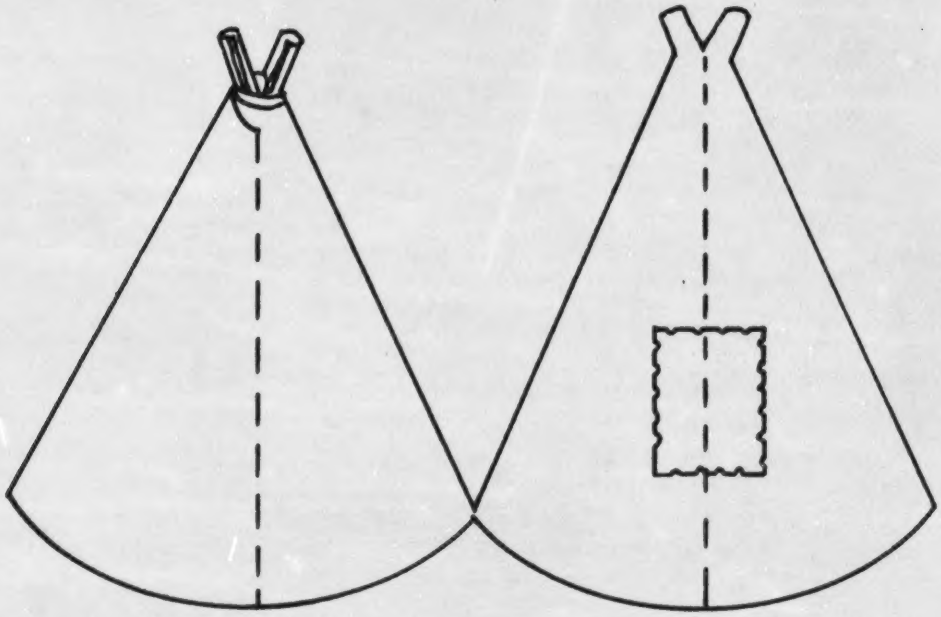
Playing Directions:

One Player

The player takes all 12 teepees out of the box and spreads them out on a table with all right halves on one side and all left halves on the other. Player then tries to match the teepee halves, by matching the quotation with the person who said it. The player can check matches by turning the teepees over. If it is a correct match, a postage stamp of the person quoted will fit together properly on the back of the two teepee halves.

Two Players

Players spread out all 12 teepees on a table with all left halves grouped together and all right halves grouped together. First player reads the quote from any tent half and tries to match it with the name of the person who said it. If correct (checks by seeing if the postage stamps on the back match), teepee stays with that player. If not correct, the halves are put back. Next player continues in the same manner. The player who ends up with the most teepees is the winner.

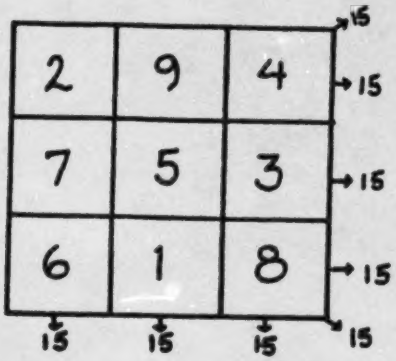


Stamp Square Solitaire 15

Number of Players: 1 player
Contents: 9 squares with stamps of specific face value on them

Playing Directions:

The player takes the 9 squares and lays them out on a table or desk. The face values of the stamps must be arranged in rows and columns of 3 squares each, with rows, columns and diagonals each having a total added value of 15.

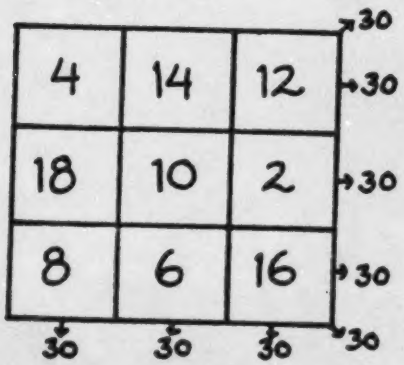


Stamp Square Solitaire 30

Number of Players: 1 player
Contents: 9 squares with stamps of specific face value on them

Playing Directions:

The player takes the 9 squares and lays them out on a table or desk. The face value of the stamps must be arranged in rows and columns of 3 squares each, with rows, columns and diagonals each having a total added value of 30.



Block of Four

Number of Players: 2 to 4 players
Contents: 44 cards, 11 sets of 4 each

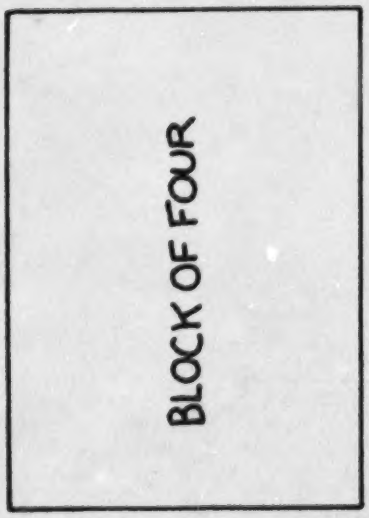
Playing Directions:

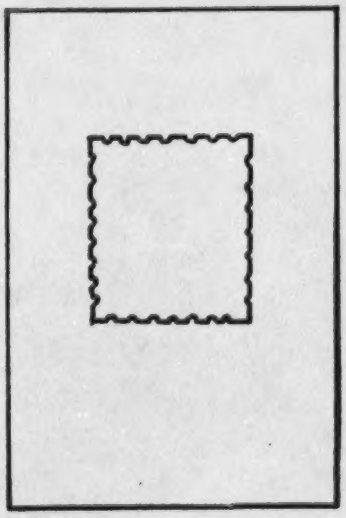
One player shuffles the cards and deals 4, one at a time, facedown, to each player. Remaining cards are placed facedown in the center of the table.

Player at dealer's left begins by calling on any other player for a card which will help complete a "Block of Four" for which the player holds one or more cards. If the player called upon has the requested card, it's given to the caller, who then continues calling until failing to receive a desired card.

The player then draws a card from the top of the deck. If the player draws the card asked for, player may again call from players until unsuccessful, and draws again from the deck. When an incorrect card is drawn from the deck, the turn passes to the player at left.

When a player gets a complete "Block of Four," it should be set aside. When all the cards have been gathered into Blocks of Four, the game ends. The player having the most is the winner.





Block of Four—this is a term in stamp collecting for an unsevered group of stamps that are 2 stamps wide and 2 stamps high.

Some Blocks of Four:
Owls
Endangered Flora
Wildlife Conservation
Pennsylvania Toleware
Colonial American Craftsmen
Butterflies
American Trees
Pueblo Art
Save Our Resources
Quilts
Coral Reefs

C.O.D. or Collect On Delivery

Number of Players: 2 to 4 players
Contents: C.O.D. gameboard
36 game cards with stamps on them
4 markers
1 die

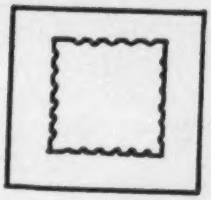
Players select a marker and place it on *any* square on the outer rim of the gameboard. Players *cannot* share a square.

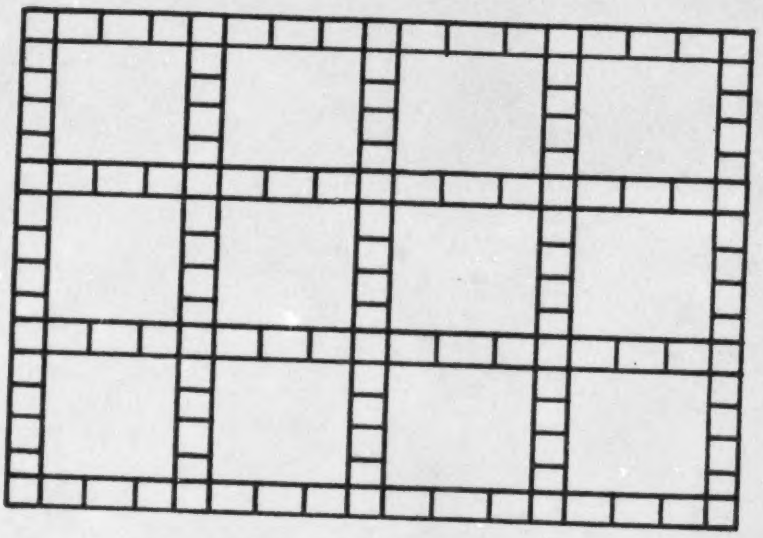
Each player is given a game card. First player throws the die and moves the corresponding number of spaces in the direction of the box which identifies that player's game card. The box may be entered at any adjacent square.

Upon entering the box, the player reads it and identifies his picture game card stamp. If the player has entered the correct stamp category box, the game card is kept and a new one drawn from the pile. The player will next head toward the box which will identify the new game card stamp.

If in the wrong square, the other players must say so. On next turn the player may again head toward the correct square category.

Players continue in turn. When all the game cards have been played, or at the end of a set time, the player with the most cards is the winner.





Creature Stamp Out

Number of Players: 2 to 4 players
Contents: 1 spinner
24 Creature Stamp Out cards

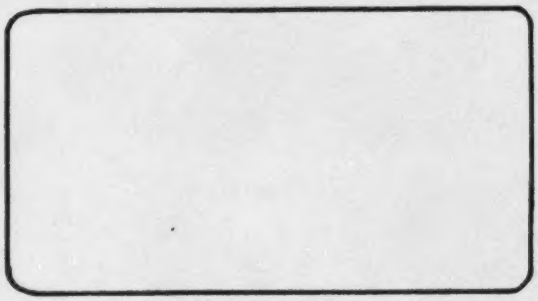
Playing Directions:

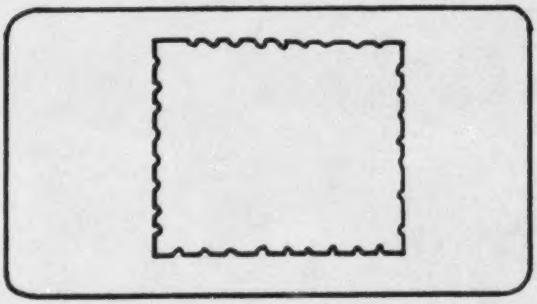
Place the spinner on the table and spread all the cards out around it, with the stamp side facing up.

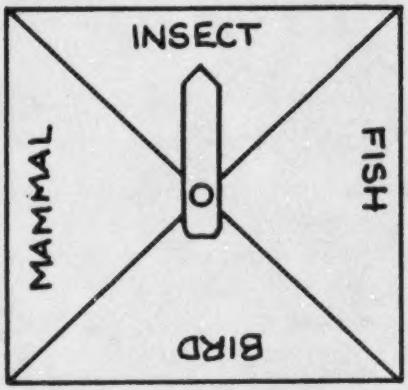
First player spins and—when the arrow stops at a category—reads the name of the category. Player then selects a stamp which fits that category. For example, arrow might stop and point to MAMMAL. Player would then pick out a stamp with a lamb on it and say, "A lamb is a mammal." The player keeps that card.

Next player does the same. If a player spins and gets a category for which no more cards are left, the turn is lost.

Play continues until all cards are gone. The player with the most cards at the end is the winner.







Meet the Mailman

Number of Players: 2 to 3 players
Contents: 24 Meet the Mailman envelopes
24 Meet the Mailman stamp cards

Playing Directions:

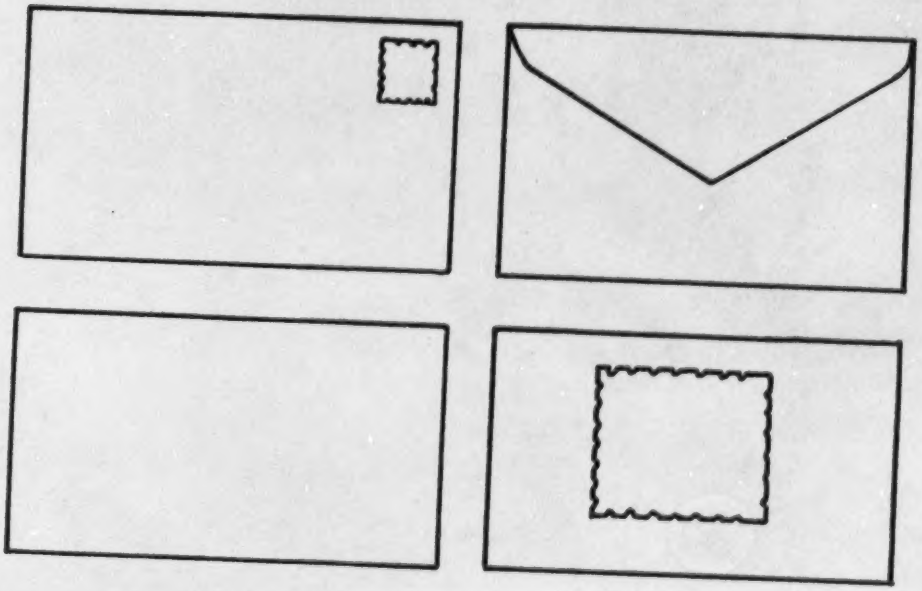
Player shuffles the stamp cards and deals all of them out. MEET THE MAILMAN envelopes are placed, *face down*, in the center of the playing area.

First player draws an envelope, reads the directions aloud, and tries to match it with a card in his own hand. If a match is made, the envelope and the stamp card are placed on the table in front of the player. If no match is made, the envelope is placed in a discard pile, with the directions *facing up*.

Next player may either take the top envelope from the playing pile or the top discard envelope if the player is holding a match for it.

Play continues in this manner, with each player drawing from either pile and making a match or discarding the envelope. When the playing deck has been used up, the discard pile is turned over and play continues.

The first player to get rid of all the stamp cards held is the winner.



Philatelic Folk

Number of Players: 2 to 5 players
Contents: 40 playing cards containing 10 distinct sets with 4 in each set

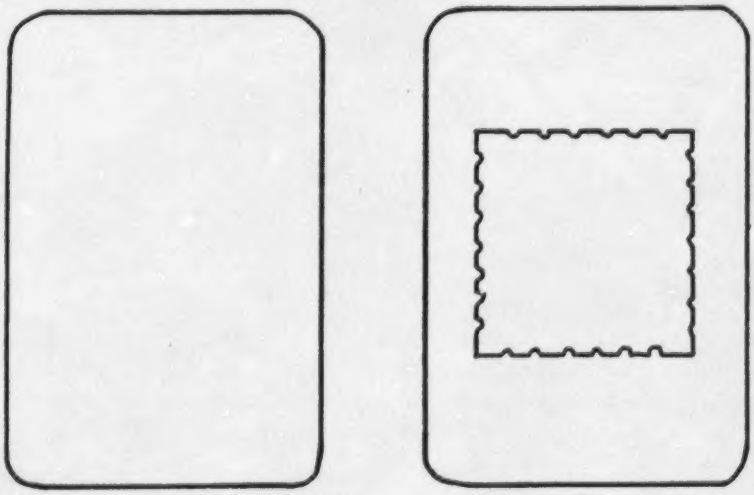
Playing Directions:

One player shuffles the cards and stacks them in a deck. First player draws a card and puts it face up in front of him. The next player does the same and play continues like this until each player has drawn one card and placed it face up in front of him.

Play can continue in this manner, or a player may choose to take a card from an opponent rather than from the deck. If a card is taken from an opponent, it can only be one which will fit a category the player has.

The first player to have four cards to complete a category is the winner.

(**NOTE:** Some possible categories include: United States Presidents, inventors, explorers, Black Americans, poets, authors, famous women. Be sure that each person selected fits only one of the categories chosen.)



POST-O

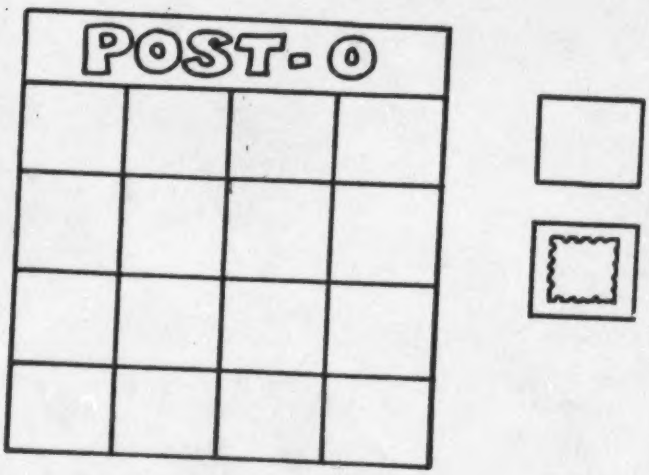
Number of Players: 2 to 4 players
Contents: 4 POST-O game cards
64 POST-O covers with foreign country stamps on one side and word POST-O on the other

Playing Directions:

Each player places a POST-O card in front of him. POST-O covers are placed, stamp side down, on the table.

First player selects a cover and turning it over, must name the country from which the stamp comes. If that country is on the player's POST-O card, it may be covered with that POST-O cover. If not, the card is returned, face down, to those on the table. Each player continues in the same manner.

First player to have four countries covered in a row either vertically, horizontally, or diagonally, calls out "POST-O" and if stamps match countries on the card, player is the winner. Then cards are uncovered, POST-O covers placed in the center of the table, and another game begins. Players may wish to trade POST-O cards for the next game.



(NOTE: It is helpful to supply a "Stamp Identifier" with this game, so that players can check to see that stamps are from countries given. For example, in this way it is possible to check that a postage stamp with the word "Bahawalpur" is from Pakistan. The Stamp Identifier can be typed in a card and laminated or a commercial one can be purchased and used for this purpose.)

Stamp Casino

Number of Players: 2 to 4 players
Contents: 35 playing cards (deck contains 4 LUCKY ONES, 4 twos, 4 threes, 4 fours, 4 fives, 3 sixes, 3 sevens, 3 eights, 3 nines, 2 tens, 1 LUCKY TEN)

Playing Directions:

Shuffle the cards and deal 4, face down, to each player. Put 3 cards, face up, on the board and the remaining deck is put aside. The object of the game is to pick up the most matches *or* combinations from the board.

The deck of 35 cards contains four LUCKY ONES and one LUCKY TEN. These cards may be used when they are in a player's hand or when they are on the board to combine two cards to make a match. EXAMPLE: if a player has a 7 and there is a 6 and a LUCKY ONE on the board, the player can place the 6 and 1 together and pick it up with the 7. *OR* if the player has a 5 and a LUCKY ONE and there is a 6 on the board, the 5 and 1 may be combined to pick up the six. A player can only combine *two* cards and one of them *MUST* have LUCKY written on it.

First player begins by trying to match a card in his hand with a card on the board (face value of the stamps must match). If a match is made, the player takes both cards and puts them in a pile in front of him.

If a player can not make a direct match or combine to make a match, then the player must place a card from his hand on the board. When a player uses all the cards in his hand, the dealer gives that player 4 more from the deck until the deck is gone. After all the cards have been played, the player making the last play (that is, taking cards from the board) gets all the cards left on the board.

All cards count for 2 points, except for LUCKY TEN and LUCKY ONES. These count for 10 points each. Player with the most points is the winner.

Stampede

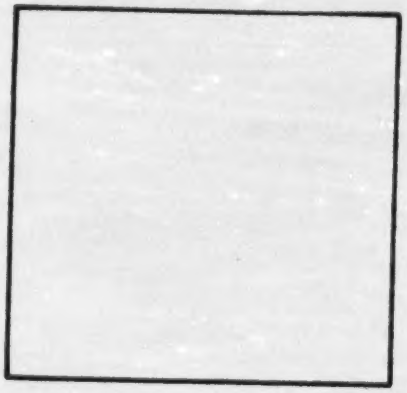
Number of Players: 2 players
Contents: 18 pink cards with information about stamps
18 blue cards with stamps or pictures of stamps matching information

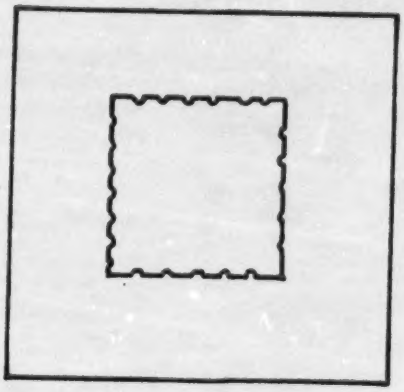
Playing Directions:

Make six rows with three pink cards and three blue cards in each row and the word STAMPEDE facing up.

One player begins by turning over a pink card, reading it aloud, and then turning over a blue card to try to match it. If they match, both the pink and the blue cards are kept by that player. Player continues until an unsuccessful match. If the cards do not match, they must be put back in the exact places and the next player takes a turn.

When all the cards have been taken, the one with the most pairs is the winner.





State of Confusion

Number of Players: 2 players, 1 judge
Contents: 25 (or as many as possible) State of Confusion cards with title on one side and statehood stamp on the other
1 egg timer and 1 state/capital answer sheet

Playing Directions:

First player spreads out all the STATE OF CONFUSION cards, stamp side down. Other player gives start signal and turns over the egg timer. Judge has card with names of all the states contained in the game and their capitals. First player now begins turning over each card, naming the state on the stamp and then naming that state's capital. Each correct response is placed in a pile in front of the player. Judge checks answers given. If an incorrect answer is given, the card is returned to the pile. First player must stop when time runs out.

First player now totals his score by counting the face value of each stamp. Second player now takes a turn, doing the same—turning over the cards, reading the name of the state, giving its capital, and then totalling his score.

The winner is the player with the highest score. This player then plays the person who served as judge in the previous game.

SECTION 4

Background and Resource Materials

Stamp basics.

Before you begin using stamps in the classroom, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with some basic stamp types. The most basic stamp groups are definitives and commemoratives, but there are also a variety of others, like special delivery and postage due stamps.

You'll find definitions and photographs of these in the book, *Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps* (formerly *Stamps & Stories*) which you can find in most post offices.

Gathering stamps from a variety of sources.

There are a number of ways to get stamps for classroom activities. You'll find cancelled stamps are the most readily available and generally cost nothing. You should also be able to get a good assortment of cancelled stamps.

One of the easiest ways to get cancelled stamps is to save stamps you find on home or school mail and have your students do the same with their families' mail. In no time at all you'll have a large assortment—with many duplicates to be sure—but enough to begin using them in class.

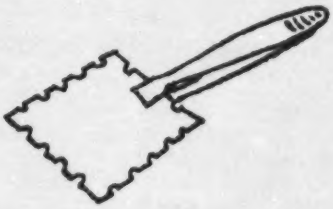
Another way is to place an announcement in your school's parent/teacher organization newsletter requesting donations of used stamps. Attach a similar request to the weekly menu which goes home with the students. And consider putting a donation box in your school lobby along with a poster asking for contributions of used stamps.

Removing stamps from envelopes.

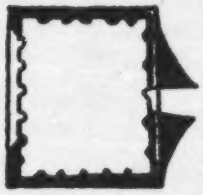
It isn't always necessary that you remove stamps from their envelopes. But if you prefer, you can remove stamps by soaking them in a pan of lukewarm water. Allow the stamp to soak until the stamp gum dissolves and gently slide the stamp off the envelope. Then place the stamp, face down on a piece of absorbent paper such as an old newspaper, towel or blotter. If the stamp curls, moisten the affected area, then flatten it out with a heavy book when dry.

Accessories you'll want to have.

In Section I of this booklet, we talked about the types of stamp albums you should consider. But there are other accessories you'll also want to help you handle and preserve the stamps you and your students collect. All are relatively inexpensive, but you should know what to look for.



1. Tongs Handle your stamps with extreme care. They're often very delicate and easily damaged. Using tongs or tweezers lets you avoid touching the stamps with your fingers. Helps keep the stamps from becoming soiled.



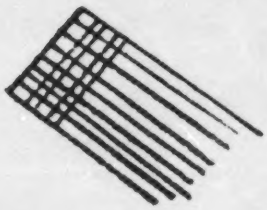
2. Hinges and Mounts When affixing stamps to the album, always use hinges—good quality, peelable hinges. Be sure to avoid self-sticking hinges for they contain a chemical that can stain your stamps.

If you have to remove a stamp from its hinges, wait until it is perfectly dry. You'll find it easier to remove and a lot safer.

How to use the hinge: Fold about 1/4 of the hinge with the gummed side on the outside. Moisten the short side and affix it to the back of the stamp. While holding the stamp with your tongs, moisten the long side of the hinge and affix it to the proper place in the page of the album. Press the stamp into position with a clean blotter, then gently lift the corners of the stamp to make sure no part of the stamp is attached to the page.

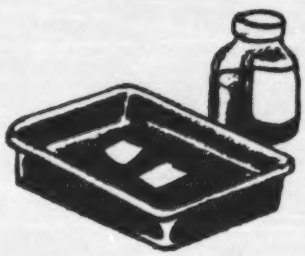
Mounts are special plastic envelopes that hold a stamp in your album. They should always be used for uncancelled stamps, to preserve their value.

3. The Catalog An essential tool for stamp collectors is a catalog. It is important in the study of stamps—something you will definitely want in your classroom. It's used to identify stamps and provide such information as the date of issue, method of printing, perforation size, watermark, and the value of the stamp (both used and unused). The catalog will also tell you what subject is depicted and why the stamp was issued. For United States stamps, the *Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps* is an excellent catalog, and is generally available at local post offices.



4. Perforation Gauge To the untrained eye, some stamps look identical but actually are not. The perforation found on the edges of stamps are sometimes the only distinguishing factor. A perforation gauge is used to measure the size and number of perforations. With the gauge—preferably a metal or plastic one—measurements can be made in millimeters.

5. Magnifying Glass Again, to help you distinguish what appear to be identical stamps, a four- or six-power magnifying glass is necessary.



6. Watermark Detector and Fluid The only distinguishing feature of some stamps is their watermark—a design or pattern incorporated into the paper during production.

The watermark detector is a small shallow black tray large enough to hold a stamp or a block of stamps. If commonly available watermark detector fluids are used, it is recommended that an adult handle this exercise as the fluid can be dangerous.

Simply place the stamp(s) in the tray and cover with a few drops of watermark fluid. This should be enough to make the watermark visible. Then remove the stamp(s) with your tongs and rest on a clean, white blotter. It should take just a minute or two to dry. These solutions will not harm the stamps.

A brief summary of stamps and postal history.

It's difficult to say exactly what makes stamp collecting so attractive to millions of people around the world. Perhaps it's because stamps serve as an international medium in which mail can travel from the busiest metropolitan areas to the darkest, most remote corners of the world. Stamps transcend both language and culture barriers. And people seem to enjoy the images they depict as well as the stories they have to tell.

Whatever the reasons, stamps have gained universal appeal ever since the first postage stamps were issued by the British government in 1840. Faced with the need to offset the increasing cost of mail delivery, the government raised revenue by issuing and selling the Penny Black stamps which pictured England's Queen Victoria.

Soon, other countries were following suit—including the United States which, in 1847, issued a one-cent stamp honoring Benjamin Franklin who had served as the first Postmaster General under the Continental Congress in 1775.

But postal service in the United States started well before the first postage stamp was issued.

Because most correspondence was being sent overseas, the Massachusetts General Court in 1639 designated the Richard Fairbanks Tavern as the official repository for overseas mail. In 1672, a postal connection between the colonies was created when New York Governor Lovelace established a monthly postal route between New York and Boston.

In 1845—two years before the first U.S. stamp was issued—some postmasters began issuing special stamps to show pre-payment of mail. Known as Postmaster Provisionals, these stamps today are quite rare . . . and consequently quite valuable.

Since then, both postage stamps and postal delivery have undergone tremendous change.

First, the responsibility for printing the stamps—which had been the work of private firms—was transferred to the Treasury Department in 1894.

Then, the postal service started to use grilles to cancel used stamps. For many years, stamps were cancelled with pen and ink but people were cleaning the stamps and using them again. Today, the grilles also emboss the stamps, making cleaning and reuse impossible.

On May 15, 1918, the Post Office Department, with the help of the Army's Air Service, initiated the world's first official airmail service. The 218-mile one-way trip from Washington, D.C. to Philadelphia to New York was quite reliable. But the public wasn't convinced and people would often send "insurance" letters by train just in case their airmail letters didn't make it.

Of course, people paid more for airmail service, but that was only until 1977 when airmail became the standard method of mail delivery within the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Stamps that have made postal history.

Generally speaking, the most valuable stamps are the rarest.

That was the case with a one-cent provisional (stamp issued to meet a temporary shortage) issued in 1856 by the Postmaster of British Guiana. The British colony had exhausted its supply of postage stamps so the postmaster decided to issue a few dozen provisionals to hold them over until a fresh supply arrived from London. Of that "few dozen," all but one has since been lost, but that single one-cent stamp was sold in 1980 for $850,000.

An envelope bearing a five-cent Blue Alexandria stamp—mailed in 1874—was bought recently in Geneva for $1 million.

In 1918, the United States Postal Service issued its first airmail stamp, known as the Curtiss Jenny. Learning this, a Washington, DC collector bought 100 of the 24-cent stamps for his collection. After purchasing the stamps, he noticed all 100 stamps pictured an upside-down airplane—an error that was quickly corrected by the Postal Service. Today, just one of those Curtiss Jenny stamps is valued at $145,000.

These are just some of the stories behind a few stamps that have earned a spot in postal history. As a class project, you might consider having your students research the stories behind these and some of the other postage stamps that have gained notoriety and great value over the years.

How to start a Ben Franklin Stamp Club.

Using stamps in the classroom benefits everyone. But establishing a Ben Franklin Stamp Club in your school is the best way to meet the needs of students who show a real interest in stamps and stamp collecting.

The Ben Franklin Stamp Club—named in honor of the first Postmaster of the United States—is designed to get students to explore their own interests at their own pace with guidance from Postal Service personnel who understand and appreciate the world of philately.

As Stamp Club members, your students will automatically receive free membership materials, posters and other publications like the colorful *Stamp Fun* newsletter—full of new ideas and projects—which is distributed every month.

As the teacher, you will serve as club advisor and will be responsible for planning programs and distributing materials to club members. You'll also receive the monthly newsletter, *Leader Feature*, to help you with ideas for sponsoring the Club.

A representative from the Postal Service—your Project Leader/Coordinator who will serve as your chief contact with the post office—will be happy to meet with you and your club at your request. The Project Leader will help arrange special projects or field trips (such as a trip to the post office), and will also provide you with films, slide shows and other audiovisual materials as you need them.

Some Ben Franklin Stamp Clubs elect officers and hold formal meetings, but your club can be as flexible as you and your members want it to be. It's only important that you all have *fun*.

Your school may already have a club established, but if not, it's easy to begin. Simply call or write the Postmaster of the local post office, or the Ben Franklin Stamp Club Coordinator. For larger post offices, contact the Director of Customer Services. If you're having difficulty reaching your local postal employees, simply write to: National Program Office, Ben Franklin Stamp Club Program, Washington, DC 20265-9994.

Resources

The following pages will provide you with a list of resource materials—publications and audio visuals—that are available to you for classroom use.

The first group of resources are available through the United States Postal Service and may be obtained by contacting the postmaster of your local post office.

For all other resource materials, contact the specific organization from which they are available.

Philatelic Societies in the United States

American Air Mail Society
Gerhard S. Wolff
540 Investment Building
Washington, D.C. 20005

American First Day Cover Society
P.O. Box 23
Elberon, NJ 07740

American Philatelic Society
Box 800
State College, PA 16801

American Topical Association
3306 North 50th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53216

Publications available from the USPS

(Available free of charge unless otherwise indicated.)

Introduction of Stamp Collecting (Publication 225)
A helpful guide for beginning stamp collectors. Covers the basics of starting a stamp collection . . . stamp types . . . necessary equipment and more.

Treasury of Stamps Album (Publication 192)
Fully illustrated, color album for young collectors. Has space for and describes all the U.S. stamps to be issued in the upcoming year.

Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps (formerly *Stamps & Stories;* Item No. 927)
An illustrated catalog of all U.S. stamps. Offers interesting stories behind some of the more celebrated stamps in postal history. Available at most post offices for $3.50.

Films available from the U.S. Postal Service

Five films on stamp collecting are currently available on a free-loan basis from the USPS film distributor, Audience Planners Inc. The films can be obtained at the following locations:

One Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020, Tel. (212) 489-7789,
Suite 1338, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654, Tel. (312) 787-7584,
5107 Douglas Fir Road, Calabasas, CA 91302, Tel. (213) 884-3100.

STAMP CLUBS ARE FUN
10 Minutes—Color
This film follows two new Benjamin Franklin Stamp Club members as they learn about stamps while visiting their local post office. Come along with them and find out how a stamp is selected. Then witness the excitement and drama that accompanies a First Day of Issue Ceremony.

STAMPS—A NATION'S CALLING CARDS
20 Minutes—Color
Stamp is a stamp, is a stamp—or is it much more? Twenty-seven billion stamps are printed each year in the U.S. Stamps are a means by which a nation pays homage to those events and men that they wish to honor—great explorers, presidents, personalities, events, inventions, organizations such as the grange and even animals. Before stamps can be printed, a design must be made and artist's drawings must be rendered. Then lithographs and/or engraving plates are made. Precise color of various inks must be mixed and matched before the printing press is put into action.

IMAGES OF AMERICA
14½ Minutes—Color
A history of commemorative stamps—the people and events which contributed to the history and heritage of our country. It explains the procedure in the selection of stamp subjects. An Advisory Committee for Stamps meets at the Postal Service headquarters several times a year to preview the subject suggestions under consideration. It depicts the work of an artist preparing original art work for a new stamp, and concludes with a montage of bicentennial stamps.

THE GAME OF COVERS
9½ Minutes—Color
There is a first day of issue ceremony for almost all new stamps and postal stationery issues. Everyone attending, from the serious stamp collector to the casual amateur, wants a souvenir of that special day. This film traces the growth of interest in collecting first day covers and captures the fun and excitement of several first day ceremonies.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL
7 Minutes—Color
This colorful film relates recent stamp design to natural beauty and scenic wonders of America.

In addition to these films, your local USPS stamp club representative will provide you with additional information on other stamp collecting slides and filmstrips that are available in your area.

Publications available from other organizations

(For pricing or other information, contact these organizations directly.)

Linn's Stamp News
Box 29
Sidney, OH 45367

Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News
Box 1660
Portland, ME 04104

Minkus New World Stamp Catalogue
Minkus Publications, Inc.
116 W. 32nd St.
New York, NY 10001

Minkus Stamp Journal
116 W. 32nd St.
New York, NY 10001

National Stamp News
Box 696
New York, NY 10036

Scott Stamp Monthly
530 5th Ave.
New York, NY 10036

Stamps
153 Waverly Place
New York, NY 10014

Stamp Collector
Box 10
Albany, OR 97321

Stamp Show News and Philatelic Review
1839 Palmer Ave.
Larchmont, NY 10538

Stamp World
Box 29
Sidney, OH 45367

United States Specialist
19 Maple Street
Arlington, MA 02174

Audio Visuals available from the American Topical Association

3306 North 50th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53216

A-B-C's of Topical Collecting
35mm slide set. Reference No. 50

Animals
35mm slide set. Reference No. 2

Astronomy
35mm slide set. Reference No. 46

First Day Cover Collecting—A Primer

35mm slide set (50 slides) with descriptive commentary on keyed cards; one set available with 3 3/4 ips taped commentary. Program poses questions, then answers them. Intended to help beginners.

Elephants
35mm slide set. Reference No. 38

Flag
35mm slide set. Reference No. 9

Insects and Butterflies
35mm slide set. Reference No. 13

Lincoln's Life and Monuments
35mm slide set. Reference No. 42

Bible Stories
35mm filmstrip. Reference No. 29

Audio Visuals available from The Philatelic Foundation

99 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016

Postage Stamps as Windows
35mm slide-tape (20 minutes) program with teacher's manual. Part I of a three-part "Romance of Stamp Collecting" series for teachers.

Pageant of Civilization
35mm slide-tape (20 minutes) program with teacher's manual. Part II of a three-part "Romance of Stamp Collecting" series for teachers.

How to Collect Stamps
35mm slide-tape (20 minutes) program with teacher's manual. Part III of a three-part "Romance of Stamp Collecting" series for teachers.

The Romance of Stamp Collecting
35mm slide-tape (60 minutes) program with teacher's manual. Combines the three preceding programs. Designed to aid teachers with stamp collecting—either as a class or as an extra-curricular activity for the 10–17 age group.

Audio Visuals available from Herbert M. Elkins Company

10031 Commerce Avenue
Tujunga, CA 91042

Community Helpers: Postmen at Work
35mm filmstrip tells the story of postal workers and the jobs they do.

Audio Visuals available from E.M. Hales and Company

1201 South Hastings Way
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Let's Go to a Post Office
35mm filmstrip with sound.

Audio Visuals available from Stanton Films

7934 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90046

American Heritage in Stamps
16mm motion picture film with sound, 11 minutes. Uses stamps to discuss the contribution of men and women who helped shape our American heritage.

Audio Visuals available from the National Center for Audio Tapes

Stadium Building, Room 320
University of Colorado
Boulder, CO 80302

Stories Behind Familiar Things
Audio-tape reel, 60 minutes. Treats the stories behind postage stamps.
No. 4 in a series.

Films available from Stan Gib

1325 Franklin Avenue
Garden City, NY 11530

Stamps from Great Britain
A variety of 16mm films on the "Stamps of Great Britain" are available upon request from Stan Gib, the official agents for the British Post Office.